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Criminal Justice Division  
Office of the Governor

# Child Sex Trafficking Team

*High Level Goals and Strategies*

January 2018

# Background

# Child Sex Trafficking

The definition is often misunderstood.

Child sex trafficking occurs when a person:

Knowingly **traffics** a child under the age of 18 (DOES NOT have to know child is under 18) and causes by any means the child to engage in or become the victim of commercial sex acts or child sex abuse\*

**Receives a benefit** from participating in a venture that involves commercial sex acts or sex abuse.

**Engages in sexual conduct** with a trafficked child.

Texas Penal Code, Section 20A.02

Traffics	Causes	*Commercial Sex Acts or Sex Abuse
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• transports,</li><li>• entices,</li><li>• recruits,</li><li>• harbors,</li><li>• provides, <b>OR</b></li><li>• otherwise obtains by any means</li></ul>	By any means ( <b>no force, fraud or coercion required if victim is under 18</b> )	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• continuous sexual abuse, indecency with a child, sexual assault (&amp; agg.), prostitution,</li><li>• promotion (&amp; agg.) of prostitution,</li><li>• sexual performance by a child,</li><li>• employment harmful to children,</li><li>• possession or promotion of child pornography</li></ul>



# Child Sex Trafficking Team

## Creation of a Statewide Program

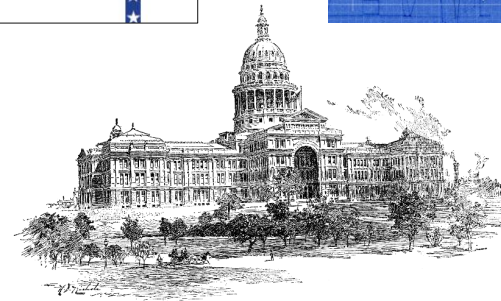
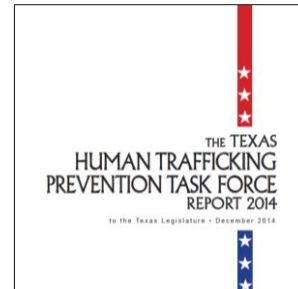
In his Bicentennial Blueprint, Governor Greg Abbott recommended that “the state should bring service providers together to provide comprehensive, wrap-around care to child sex trafficking victims in Texas.”

A primary purpose of this recommendation was to ensure that exploited children all over the state could begin to heal through access to the services they need.

His concern for this issue is based in years of experience including the work and recommendations of his Texas Human Trafficking Prevention Task Force when he was the Attorney General. In 2014, the task force identified a need for a more comprehensive approach and a single state office to address the commercial sexual exploitation of children.

During the 84<sup>th</sup> Legislative Session in 2015, the Texas Legislature responded with House Bill 10, creating a statewide Child Sex Trafficking Prevention Unit, and an amendment to House Bill 1446 established the Governor’s Program for Victims of Child Sex Trafficking. Together, these bills provided the basis for creation of the Child Sex Trafficking Team (CSTT) within the Governor’s Criminal Justice Division.

The 84<sup>th</sup> and 85<sup>th</sup> Legislatures appropriated \$5.7 million each biennium for the work of the Child Sex Trafficking Team.



# The Charge

Texas Government Code §§ 772.0062 – 772.0063

Assist agencies in leveraging and coordinating state resources

Collect and analyze research and information

Provide support for prosecutions

Facilitate collaborative efforts to prevent, recover, and restore

Coordinate with state and local law enforcement, state agencies, and service providers to identify child sex trafficking victims

Coordinate with local service providers to create a customized package of services to fit the immediate and long-term rehabilitation and treatment needs



# Child Sex Trafficking Team

## Goals

**Bring justice** for survivors by holding traffickers, buyers, and those who profit from trafficking accountable.

**Restore** survivors through immediate and long-term services and supports they need to recover.



**Protect** children by building their awareness of and resilience to child exploitation and curbing demand for child sex trafficking.

**Recognize** child sex trafficking in all its forms by raising public awareness.

**Recover** survivors through collaborative efforts spanning multiple systems.

# Guiding Principles

## CSTT and its partners commit to the following principles:

1. Our systems and programs prioritize the needs of exploited youth and strive to give equal access to services regardless of system involvement.
2. We treat exploited youth as victims and survivors, not perpetrators.
3. We are collaborative.
4. We are survivor informed.
5. We seek to prevent exploitation by educating the public, supporting protective factors for all youth, and by building resiliency of our most vulnerable youth.
6. Our approaches, systems and services are trauma informed and responsive, and include trust based relationships.
7. We develop and support community-based, sustainable resources and services.
8. We are committed to long-term individualized services, including planning for and re-engaging with youth after relapse.
9. We research the causes of and effective responses to exploitation and we evaluate and continuously improve our activities.
10. We work to prevent and reduce demand for exploitation and to hold all exploiters, including facilitators and those who benefit from exploitation, accountable.



# CSTT Strategies



# CSTT Strategies to Protect Children

*“Predators seem to sense when a child is vulnerable.”*

*CST survivor*



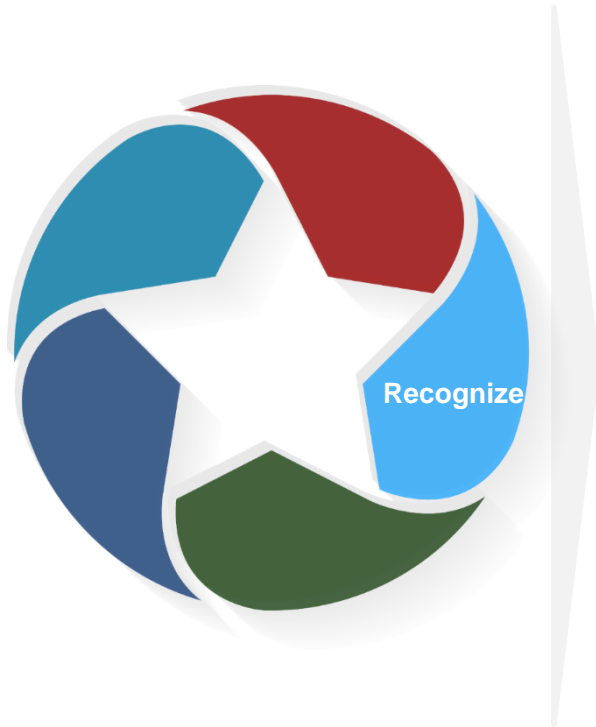
- Provide prevention education for all youth, educators, caregivers
- Support targeted interventions to reduce vulnerability of high risk youth
- Disrupt the market by deterring potential buyers and decreasing demand



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# CSTT Strategies to Recognize Child Victims

*“The hardest thing is that you are hidden in plain sight. We are not going to walk up and say ‘please help me.’” -CST survivor*



- Raise public awareness
- Implement universal screening tool
- Enhance hotline services to Texas
- Research trafficking and share findings
- Provide targeted training to recognize victims
- Build capacity within child welfare and juvenile justice systems to recognize and serve victims and at risk children



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# CSTT Strategies to Recover Child Victims

*“What your trafficker tells you is exactly right. No one cares about you – they think you are the criminal.” CST survivor*



- Enhance National Hotline to help with timely recovery of victims and effective referrals
- Develop specialized emergency placements and services for recovered children, and when appropriate, their families
- Develop local Care Coordination Teams to coordinate recovery by law enforcement or other identification of victim and delivery of services to victims and improve collaboration among stakeholders
- Train and equip all stakeholders to provide victim-centered, trauma informed response



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# CSTT Strategies to Restore Child Victims

*“It takes time because you have been deeply defined by someone with power and control over you – you feel powerless.” CST survivor*



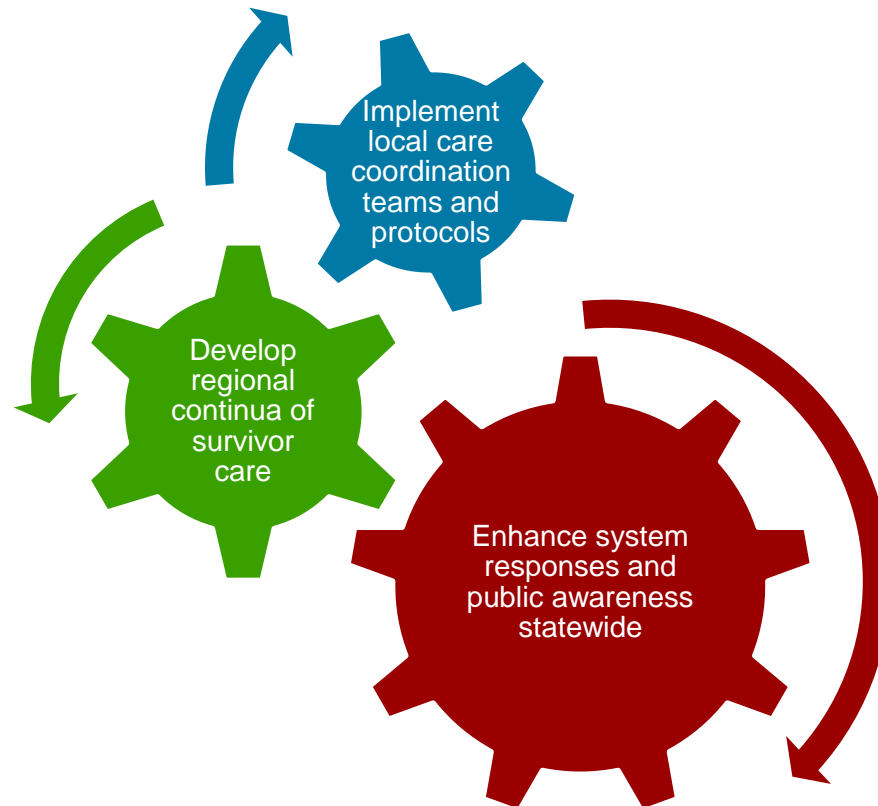
- Develop a statewide network of regional continua of survivor care that provides long-term services, supports and opportunities that empower victims to move from **surviving** to **thriving**.
- Support care coordination teams to ensure collaboration across systems to provide effective delivery of individualized set of services within regional continua of care.



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# Texas' size and diversity and the Urgency of Victims' Needs

We work **statewide** to improve system responses and raise awareness, **regionally** to develop regional continua of care, and **locally** to implement the coordination of care for survivors.

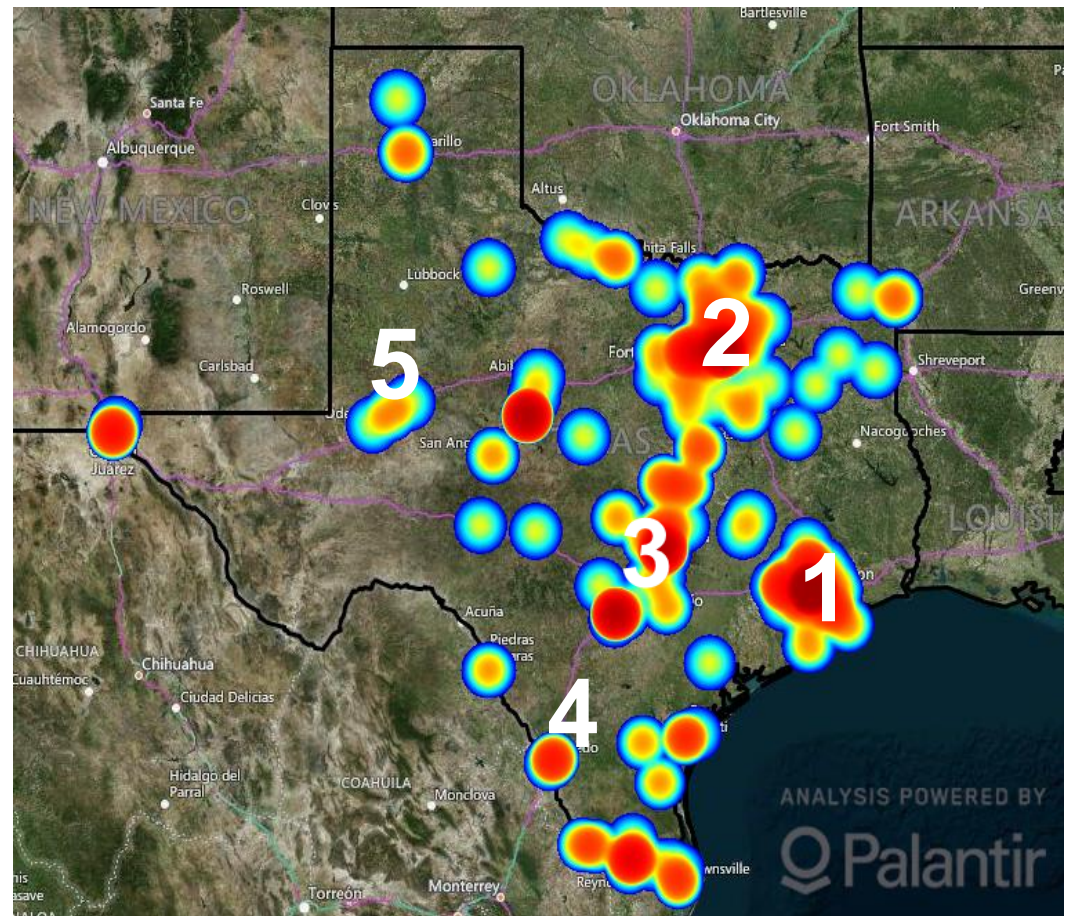


# Regional Continua of Survivor Care

Each region will have the tools, training, and services needed to ensure that victims are recognized, recovered, and given the trauma-responsive services needed to heal and thrive in the short and long-term.

Each region will have a CSTT Regional Administrator to ensure growth and continuous improvement of the continua.

1. East Texas
2. North Texas
3. South Texas
4. Central Texas
5. West Texas





# Regional Continua of Survivor Care

It takes a variety of services in the short and long term to put the pieces together.

Drop in programs and street outreach. Safe homes. Safety planning. Protective orders.

Emergency and ongoing medical and behavioral health services, including inpatient and community options.

Customized educational and vocational services and mentoring.

Transition back into the community. Opportunities for survivor leadership.



Specialized emergency and long term placements. In-home care and family support. Supportive housing.

Legal representation for set-aside of related criminal history, for family matters, and any other legal needs.

Personal advocates that build trust based relationships that support survivors throughout recovery and restoration. Peer support. Family therapy.

Financial assistance to access services. Help with credit recovery and debt issues, financial security.



# Local Care Coordination is Essential because even with Many Services, Accessing them can be Overwhelming

Survivors and their families report frustration with the difficulty navigating potential resources and services.

I wanted out, but all I knew was my pimp. I didn't know anyone else cared.

My car's not working. I can't get my daughter to all of the appointments they've set up.

I don't know where to even start to get the records from his last 27 placements or police reports.

Every place I called asked how I would pay, before even talking to me.

Police want to help me, but only when there are strings attached.

The court said I had to show up, but I don't remember when or where.

They tell me they can't help unless I've been clean for 10 days. How can I stop without their help?!!





# Local Care Coordination

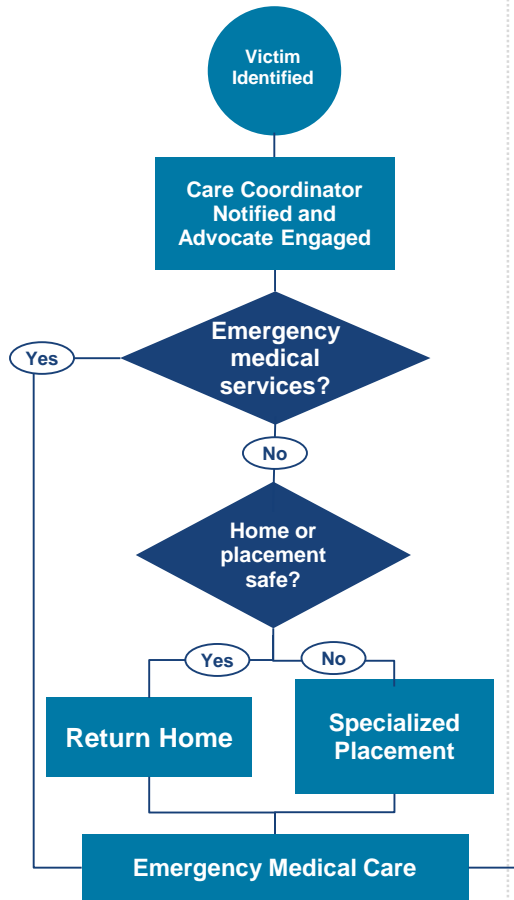
Care coordination ensures that resources are fully leveraged to meet each child's individual short and long term needs, regardless of system involvement

- **Who:** Care is coordinated through local inter-agency multi-disciplinary Care Coordination Teams (CCTs) that include representatives from juvenile probation, DFPS, advocacy agency, residential providers, medical and behavioral health providers, law enforcement agencies, and the family/youth when appropriate.
- **What:** Facilitated by a Care Coordinating Agency, each CCT staffs victims of child sex trafficking survivors up to 18\* years of age, regardless of system involvement, recovered in or domiciled in the CCT's jurisdiction. The CCT develops recommended service plans, and if the child's guardian authorizes, facilitates the child's access to services.
- **Where:** CCTs will be developed statewide in each large county and in, rural areas, among multiple counties. In 2018, CCTs will begin staffing victims' needs in Harris, Dallas, Tarrant, Bexar, and Travis Counties, areas in Texas' trafficking triangle, an area that connects 70% of the state's population and much of its trafficking.
- **When:** Care coordination begins when a child is recovered by law enforcement or otherwise identified and reported to the Care Coordinator. If an emergency response is warranted, essential members of the CCT quickly staff the child's needs on the scene or by phone to make immediate recommendations and referrals. Once the child is stabilized, the CCT will meet regularly to update service plan recommendations.

# Sample Local Coordination of Survivor Care

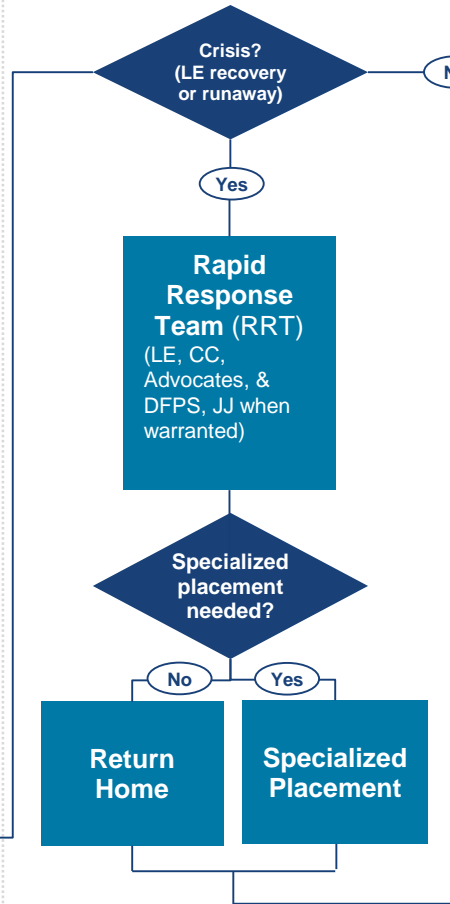
## Meet Emergency Needs

The child is recovered or identified, care coordinator and advocate engaged, and child's immediate needs met (0-48 hours).



## Provide Urgent Care

In crisis, RRT plans and delivers stabilizing services for 1-7 days. Care Coordinator leads service delivery and advocate supports.



## Support Restoration

Interagency CCT develops and regularly updates individualized, trauma-informed care plan for treatment, support and LE engagement.



## Build Resiliency

Provide aftercare for continued stability and wellness in the long term.



**Care Coordinator:** point of contact, notifies & convenes RRTs and CCTs and communicates plans & decisions

**Advocate:** engages with child immediately upon recovery, maintains supportive, trust-based relationship and contact throughout restoration and aftercare

# CSTT Strategies to Bring Justice for Child Victims

Sellers, buyers and facilitators of child sex trafficking – and those who profit from it – must be held to accountable to society and specifically to survivors.



- Provide training and resources to criminal justice systems to hold traffickers, buyers and facilitators accountable
- Bring attention, resources and strategies to prevent and counter demand
- Empower victim participation in investigations and prosecutions
- Shift cultural norms from blaming victims to holding exploiters accountable



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# Investment in Our Strategies To Date

Since CSTT's launch, over \$21 million in projects have been funded, focused largely providing critical services to survivors.

The Legislature appropriated \$5.7 million for the 2016/2017 and the 2018/2019 biennium. With additional grant funding, we've been able to invest \$21 million in our strategies so far.



# What can you do?

# We Need Everyone On the Team to Beat This

A few ideas...

## LEARN

- View OAG training video “Be the One” and share with others.  
<https://texasattorneygeneral.gov>
- National Center for Missing & Exploited Children: [www.missingkids.org](http://www.missingkids.org)
- National Human Trafficking Hotline: <https://polarisproject.org>

## SHARE

- Share articles and social media posts that you see on the topic.

## PREVENT

- Become a CASA volunteer advocate, a Big Brother/Big Sister, or a mentor for a child in need.

## SUPPORT

- Volunteer for or provide financial support to an organization serving survivors or providing prevention education and outreach.

## IF YOU SEE SOMETHING, SAY SOMETHING

- 911 if emergency or 1-888-3737-888

# Questions?

## Contact

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